40 W. Smith 729

Chriſtian Converſation;

IN

Six DIALOGUES.

I. Between a Doubting Chriſtian, and one more Confirmed, about ASSURANCE.
II. Between the ſame Perſons, about MORTIFICATION.
III. Between *Eutocus* and *Fidelius*, about NATURAL THINGS SPIRITUALIZED.
IV. Between *Simplicious* and *Conſocius*, about UNION.
V. Between *Thlipſius* and *Melandrus*, about AFFLICTIONS.
VI. Between *Athanaſius* and *Biotes*, about DEATH.

By a Private GENTLEMAN.

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1 PET. i. 15.
Be ye holy in all manner of converſation.

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THE

PREFACE.

IT muſt be acknowledged to be a great Fault in moſt of us, that call our ſelves Chriſtians, that when we meet together, we do not take more of the Things relating to our Eternal Salvation. I have heard ſay that the Primitive Chriſtians uſed to ſpeak ſo much of the Kingdom of Chriſt, as made the Princes of thoſe Days Jealous of them, as if they were going to ſet up an

earthly Kingdom; but in our Days the Converſation runs chiefly upon the Things of this Life; and earthly Politicks are too much the Subject of our Diſcourſes: Or if in our Common Converſation ſometimes perchance, A Good Man out of the Good Treaſure of his Heart, bringeth forth ſomething that is Good; *he is hardly heard, often anſwered by ſilence, or the Diſcourſe preſently turned into Controverſy about ſome difficult Point in Religion, and ſo ends in a Heat. Surely*

ly we have better Things to confir about, than the Men of this World have, and yet when they meet together, with what Pleaſure do they entertain one another about theſe periſhing Things, ſo as never to be weary. And ſhall we that have profeſſedly renounced this World, and choſen our Portion in that to come, that are Heirs to the Kingdom that God has promiſed to them that love him, *have it ſo little at our Heart, as never to make mention of it? eſpecially to thoſe of the* ſame

Body,

Body, and Houſhold, fellow Citizens, fellow Heirs, and Partakers of the ſame Promiſe in Chriſt by the Goſpel, *to whom we ſhall be ſo far from giving* Offence *by our encouraging mutual Conferences about theſe Things; as that thereby, we may greatly Eſtabliſh and Comfort them. Our Saviour hath told us, that* out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh; *and therefore 'tis certain that if the great Things of another World were more in our Hearts, they would be oftner upon*

upon our Tongues. I wiſh that Place in Malachi iii 16. *was as well regarded, as it is commonly known, how that* they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name: and they ſhall be mine ſaith the Lord of Hoſts in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him.

I have

The PREFACE.

I have in the following Sheets put into Writing a few Dialogues of this nature, with all the Faithfulness my Memory would admit of, concealing the Names of the Persons, that I might not be a betrayer of Conversation, and design it only as an Essay or Specimen whereby to provoke some abler Pen to do something of this kind, that may be more useful and edifying to the Church of Christ. May God give his Blessing to it, that it may do some Good, and I have my End.

DIA-

DIALOGUE I.

Between a Doubting Chriſtian and one more Confirmed.

Of Assurance.

Doubting. IF I could attain to one Grain of Aſſurance of my Everlaſting Salvation, how happy ſhould I be? but to be always thus doubting, and ſometimes deſponding, is very uncomfortable to my ſelf, and unſerviceable to others.

Confirmed. Aſſurance as well as every other good and perfect Gift, is from above, and cometh from God; and muſt be obtained by fervent

Prayer, and holy, humble, circumſpect Walking before him; which has been your conſtant Practice as far as ever I could perceive; and therefore, Chear up my Friend, God is true and his Promiſes are Yea and Amen he that believes in Jeſus Chriſt, and repents of his Sins, ſhall never fail of Everlaſting Life.

Dou. I know, and ſtedfaſtly believe the Words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have Eternal Life*, John 3. 15. *and he that believeth on the Son hath Everlaſting Life*, v. 36. and many other places of Scripture to that purpoſe. I know alſo that *he that confeſſeth and forſaketh his Sins ſhall find Mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. and that Repentance is an indiſpenſible Duty commanded us by our Saviour, *Mark* 1. 15. and 6. 12, &c. But then I know too, that *Faith is the Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8. and ſo is Repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. and 11. 18. And ſo indeed is every other good and perfect

perfect Gift, as you just now said, *Jam.* 1. 17. Therefore I no ways doubt but they that believe the Gospel and repent of their Sins shall be saved; but my Doubts are, Whether I have true saving Faith and Repentance given me of God, or whether my Faith be not feigned, false, and presumptuous; and my Repentance out of a slavish Fear of Hell only, and not out of Love to God and Goodness. I have examined my self over and over again, by all the Rules and Marks given me by Divines in their Sermons and Writings, and taken from the Scriptures concerning my Love to God and his People, and Choice of him and his Ways, my Hatred of Sin, my Repentance of it, and Reformation of my Life, and Evangelical Obedience: I have Considered my Estate by Nature, and whether I am indeed thoroughly changed: I have Examined into my Delights, my Aversions, my Joys and Fears and all my Affections: I have searched my self narrowly to see if any

ſecret Sin be allowed of, or winked at, that might ſpoil my Peace. And whereas *the Tree is known by the Fruit*, Mat. 12. 33. I have made diligent Inquiry whether the Fruits of the holy Spirit are found in me, ſuch as *Love*, *Joy*, *Peace*, *Long-ſuffering*, *Gentleneſs*, *Goodneſs*, *Faith*, *Meekneſs*, *Temperance*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. I have not ceaſed praying for many Years for the holy promiſed Spirit, for Faith, Love, Repentance, Sanctification, Mortification, &c. and yet after all my Endeavours I am ſtill in the Dark; ſometimes indeed, I have good Hope thro' Grace that all is well with me; but then again, I fall into Fears and Jealouſies, Doubts and Diſtruſts; and am apt to conclude, that all is but feigned, or forced, or Fancy.

Conſi. You muſt have a Care you do not diſtruſt the Promiſes of God, they are Eternal Truths, and ſhall certainly be fulfilled in due Time. *He will give his holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 11. *and they that hunger*

ger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs ſhall be filled, Matth. 5. 6. and you muſt not forget that waiting upon God is a Duty often recommended in Scripture, as *Reſt in the Lord and wait patiently for him*, Pſ. 37. 7. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined to me and heard my Cry, he brought me alſo out of an horrible Pit*, Pſ. 40. 1, 2. *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine Heart, wait I ſay on the Lord*, Pſ. 27. 14. *Wait on the Lord and he ſhall ſave thee*, Prov. 20. 22. *Bleſſed are they that wait for him*, Iſa. 30. 18. *Wait on thy God continually*, Hoſ. 12. 6. *We thro' the Spirit wait for the hope of Righteouſneſs by Faith*, Gal. 5. 5. By theſe and abundance of other ſuch like Texts of Scripture, you may plainly ſee, that it is your Duty, and good for you, that you *ſhould both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord*, Lam. 3. 26. Watchfulneſs too over all our Thoughts and Affections, Words and Actions, is a

Duty

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Duty ſtrictly required of us, *watch and pray that you enter not into Temptation*, Matth. 26. 41. *I ſay unto all watch*, Mark 13. 37. *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the Faith*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Let us watch and be ſober*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 6, &c.

Dou. I bleſs God I have not been altogether a Stranger to the Duties you ſpeak of; nor will I leave off *uſing all Diligence to make my Calling and Election ſure.*

Conſi. And then you ſhall certainly have the Witneſſing, the Earneſt and Sealing of the Holy Spirit in God's good Time, when he knows it to be beſt for you, (as perhaps it may not be now,) I mean ſuch a full Aſſurance of Hope and Faith as is ſpoken of, *Heb.* 6. 11. and 10. 22. For as to ſome ſmall Degree of it, I am perſuaded it is in you already, tho' you perceive it not. There is an Infancy of Grace, wherein we are ignorant of our own Condition. There are ſtrong, and weak Chriſtians, Children, Young Men, and Fathers; *anſwerable where-*

unto

unto is the Difference of Aſſurance of God's Love uſually in the Hearts of his People. Beſides, there are Times of Tryal, Temptations, and Deſertions when God withdraws the Light of his Countenance from us, either for the Tryal of our Faith, or Puniſhment for ſome Sin; and to make us more careful for the future, and more depending upon him.

Dou. But if our Aſſurance depends upon, and gradually grows with our Sanctification, then we can have no perfect Aſſurance in this Life, becauſe no perfect Sanctification: I rather think, that when we are once juſtified by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, God is uſually pleaſed to enable us to make ſuch reflex Acts of Faith, as by the Aſſiſtance of the Spirit's applying the Promiſes to us, we become ſure of Everlaſting Salvation; the Spirit witneſſing with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God.

Conſi. There is a weak Faith, and a ſtrong Faith, a Meaſure and Proporti-

on of Faith, a Growth and Increaſe of Faith: I need not quote the Texts, for they are obvious every where in Scripture, to prove that Faith is a growing Grace, and not perfected at once; and therefore in proportion to the Strength or Weakneſs of the direct Acts of Faith, ſuch will be the Reflex.

Dou. The Apoſtle ſays, *Examine your ſelves whether you be in the Faith, prove your own ſelves: Know you not your own ſelves how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except you be Reprobates*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Whereby methinks it is plain that if we do not know we are in Jeſus Chriſt, we are Reprobates.

Confi. True, if we examine our Selves impartially, I believe we may come to ſome Knowledge of our being in the Faith, or not: and ſo may you have ſome ſmall Beginnings of Aſſurance, tho' not ſo great as to amount to a Confident Perſuaſion. Call to mind that Text of Scripture, *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth*

the

the Lord and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God. And that Text, *Hab.* 3. 17. *Altho' the Fig-Tree ſhall not bloſſom,* &c. *yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation: The Lord God is my Strength,* &c. See the firſt Epiſtle general of St. *John*, wherein he ſays, *Chap.* 5. 13. *Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal Life.* After all that has been ſaid, there is much to be aſcribed to the natural Temper and Conſtitution of a Man: ſome ſanguine Men being hardly ever in Doubts and Fears; whilſt other melancholy, fearful, ſuſpicious Perſons are never without them. Let us ply the Throne of Grace inceſſantly; let us walk circumſpectly, making daily Progreſſion in Holineſs, watching againſt all Sin, waiting for the Lord, and in his due Time, tho' he tarry, he will ſurely come. *Dou.*

Dou. Let us also pray for one another, and confer together, as often as we have Opportunity, and so thanking you for your good Advice, I take my Leave 'till next Meeting.

Confi. Grace, Mercy and Peace be with you, my dear Christian Brother, Farewell.

DIA-

DIALOGUE II.

Of Mortification.

Dou. I Am afraid Mortification is not enough ſtudied and practiſed by the Chriſtians of this Age, not excepting my ſelf.

Conſi. I am of your Mind, and ſhall not except my ſelf neither; therefore let us diſcourſe of it a little, that we may be excited thereby the better to put it in Practice.

Dou. I remember a Saying of *Luther's*, *Qui non eſt Crucianus, non eſt Chriſtianus*; he that is not a Crucified one, is not a Chriſtian.

Conſi. Not unlike to what St. *Paul* ſays, *They that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Dou.

Dou. How ſhall I know whether I have ſo *Crucified the fleſh*, or am *Crucified to the World?* as St. *Paul* ſays in another place he was, *Gal. 6. 14.*

Conſi. Every true Believer that is ingrafted into Jeſus Chriſt by Faith, and has received his Spirit, is thereby become a Member of his Body, and ſo may be ſaid to be crucified with him, or in him. *Knowing this, that our old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin*, Rom. 6. 6. *I am Crucified with Chriſt*, Gal. 2. 20. And ſo is Every true Member of Chriſt's, deſiring earneſtly *to be made conformable unto his death, as St.* Paul *did*, Phil. 3. 10. *and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Chriſt in my fleſh for his Bodies ſake which is the Church*, Col. 1. 24. Now if you find in you the ſame Diſpoſition that was in St. *Paul*, or rather the ſame Spirit that was in Chriſt, when *through the*

the eternal Spirit he offered himself without Spot to God, Heb. 9. 14. you may be ſure you are crucified with Chriſt, *&c.*

Dou. As far as I know my own Heart, I think I may truly ſay, that I have wholly delivered up my ſelf to God in and thro' Jeſus Chriſt, moſt willingly to be at his Diſpoſal as to Life or Death, Honour or Shame, Profit or Loſs, Pleaſure or Pain, *&c.* and do hope in him, that by his Grace, if he ſhould call me to honour him by the moſt ſhameful and painful Death, I ſhould not baulk it; but be aſſiſted by his Spirit, ſtrengthning my Weakneſs to go through with it, as the Martyrs have done before me.

Conſi. That's well ſaid indeed, and as much as I can ſay for my ſelf; therefore why ſhould we doubt?

Dou. I ſaid, as far as I know my own Heart, and of that I doubt, *for the Heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* Jer. 17. 9.

Conſ.

Confi. The next Verſe ſays *I the Lord ſearch the Heart, I try the Reins.* Let us pray to him as *David* did, *ſearch me, O God, and know my Heart, try me and know my Thoughts; and ſee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting,* Pſ. 139. 23, 24. *and that he will give us a new Heart as he promiſed,* Ezek. 36. 26.

Dou. Bleſſed St. *Peter*, I do believe, had ſome Faith, and thought he had a good Heart, and verily intended to ſtand to his Word when he ſaid, *tho' I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* Notwithſtanding which, we read how ſhamefully he denied our Lord before we come to the End of that Chapter, *Mat.* 26.

Confi. Bleſſed be God for *Peter*'s Repentance, and Chriſt's acceptance of it: and for that kind Word, tell my Diſciples and *Peter*, Mark 16. 7. which is recorded that we may not deſpair when we fall as he did.

Dou.

Dou. Did not Christ tell *Peter* just before his Fall, that he had prayed for him, that *his Faith should not fail?*

Confi. It did not totally fail, but recovered it self again, which thing Christ hinted to him by saying, when thou art *converted, strengthen thy brethren.* By converted, there, I understand the Repentance that followed. And that *Peter*'s Faith was but weak at that Time in Comparison of what it was afterward, may well be inferred from hence, that it was after this that Christ breathed on him and the rest of the Disciples, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost, and that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary Manner, sometime after, on the Day of Pentecost, whereby they were enabled to lay down their Lives for Christ, as most of them actually did.

Dou. This Work of Mortification is a hard work, I perceive we must not only be daily mortifying our Members which are upon Earth, such as

as are mentioned by the Apoſtle in the 3d of the *Coloſſians*, *as Fornication*, *Uncleanneſs*, *inordinate Affection*, *evil Concupiſcence*, *Covetouſneſs*, *Anger*, *Wrath*, *Malice*, *Blaſphemy*, *filthy Communication*, *Lying*, &c. *but muſt put off the old Man with all his Deeds*, *and muſt put on the new Man which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of him that created him*; which we can *only do thro' the Spirit*, *for it is not in fleſh and blood to do it*, *for the carnal mind is Enmity againſt God*, *and they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God*, Rom. 8.

Confi. I look upon all Mankind, as naturally deſcended from *Adam*, to be one corrupted Maſs, on which the ſentence of God for ſin, *Thou ſhalt ſurely die*, has taken place. Again, I look upon all true Believers as another Body whereof Chriſt is the Head, and every Believer a Member of that Body, quickned with the ſame Spirit from the Head, and growing up in Sanctification and Holineſs unto eternal

eternal Life, now as the old *Adam* in us decays and dies by a *Voluntary Mortification*, and Crucifixion of it in all its Members; ſo in ſuch proportion (and partly by that very means) does the new Man in Jeſus Chriſt grow and increaſe and bear Fruit, till at length (the old Man being wholly put off at our natural death) we become perfect Men in Jeſus Chriſt, never to die any more. Like as a Grain of Wheat ſown in the Earth, unleſs it rots and dies, it brings forth nothing, but as it decays the Blade ſprings up, 'till at length being wholly conſumed, the new Blade and Stalk take Root downward, and bear Fruit upward, ſee Joh. 12. 24. 1 Cor. 15. 36. 2 Kings 19. 30. Iſa. 37. 31. *So is the Kingdom of God, as if a Man ſhould caſt eed into the Ground, and ſhould ſleep, and riſe Night and Day, and the Seed ſhould ſpring and grow up he knoweth not how,* Mark 4. 26, 27.

Dou. Pray what do you mean by a Voluntary Mortification, *&c.*

Conſi. I mean that as Chriſt did voluntarily offer up himſelf a Sacrifice for our Sins; ſo every true Member of his will offer himſelf up to him according to the Apoſtle, *I beſeech you therefore Brethren, by the mercies of God, that you preſent your ſelves a Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable to God, which is your reaſonable ſervice,* Rom. 12. 1. *Ye alſo as lively Stones, are built up a Spiritual Houſe, an Holy Prieſthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 Pet. 2. 5.

Dou. You ſaid that partly by the means of Mortification the new Man grew, *&c.*

Conſi. As the Seed in the Ground when it rots and dies does not turn to Earth, but ſerves for nouriſhment of the new Plant 'till it is all conſumed and ſwallowed up in it: So our old Man in all its Affections and Paſſions dying as to the things of this World,

revive

revive and ſprings up again in the new Man, in Jeſus Chriſt, unto Eternal Life: As for Example, our Love to the World and all things in it, as it dies daily, ſo the Love of God increaſes, and when it is wholly dead in us, *Then verily is the Love of God perfected in us*, 1 John 2. 5. for we *cannot ſerve two Maſters, either we ſhall hate the one and love the other, or elſe hold to the one and deſpiſe the other*, Mat. 6. 24. *If any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 John 2. 15. And the like may be ſaid of any other Affections or Paſſions of the Soul.

Dou. This puts me in mind of the young Man in the Goſpel who when Chriſt commanded him to ſell all that he had and give to the Poor, and he ſhould have Treaſures in Heaven, he went away ſorrowful for he had great Poſſeſſions, *Mat.* 19. As much as to ſay, he would not do it. O unfortunate young Man, to be ſo enſnared with the Riches of the World that he muſt

leave in a little Time whether he would or not! as to prefer them before Everlasting Riches in Heaven.

Consi. We are all naturally much like that young Man, preferring some present sensual Enjoyment before everlasting Pleasures; so ignorant and sottish, so foolish and mad has Sin made us, that without the great Mercy of God giving us his Spirit to Enlighten our Understandings, to Sanctifie our Wills and Affections, we should go on still preferring a moments pleasure, or some paltry Lust before Everlasting Happiness, *For the Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: For they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are Spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *see* Rom. Chap. 8. Therefore it is that our Saviour in the Gospel so often inculcated to us, that we could not be his Disciples without denying our selves, and taking up our Cross and following him, and that to a degree of Mortification

fication equal to the plucking out of the Right Eye, or cutting off the Right Hand, and Foot, yea to the losing of our Lives, and forsaking of Houses, Lands, and neareſt and deareſt Relations when called thereto. In ſhort, if there be any thing in the World dearer to us than the Love of our Saviour, and Obedience to his Commands, then we are not Crucified to the World, nor the World to us.

Dou. With Men theſe things are impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible.

Confi. Who has promiſed to give us his Holy Spirit, if we ask him and if we love him and keep his Commandments, has promiſed to dwell in us, and take up his abode with us. And what cannot the Victorious Jeſus do? who has already in our nature conquered Sin, and Satan, Death and Hell, triumphing over them upon his Croſs, *And will make all his Members ſtrong in the Lord, and in*

the Power of his might, not only to wreſtle againſt Fleſh and Blood, but alſo againſt Principallities againſt Powers, againſt Rulers of the darkneſs of this World, againſt Spiritual wickedneſs in high places, and having overcome all to ſtand, &c. Eph. 6. 12, 13. For if we look unto him by Faith, follow him our Leader and obey his Commands, *neither Tribulation or Diſtreſs, Perſecution, or Famine, or Nakedneſs, or Peril, or Sword, nor Death, nor Life, nor Principallities, nor Powers,* &c. *Nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeperate us from the Love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, nay in all theſe things we ſhall be more then Conquerors thro' him that loved us,* Rom. 8. 35. *ad finem.*

Dou. Do you think the ſame degree of Mortification is now required in us, as was in the primitive Chriſtians, when the Honour of our Saviour the propagation of the Goſpel, and Subverſion of Idolatry made it neceſſary for them to lay down their

Lives for the Truth of what they Preach'd and Profeſſed? And accordingly, they were endowed with an Extraordinary Effuſion of the Spirit to carry them through it: But now we living under Chriſtian Princes free from Perſecution of any ſort, methinks we ſhould be continually praiſing God jointly and ſeperately, and rejoicing in the God of our Salvation, for which we have many Precepts in Holy Writ, as 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Phil.* 3. 1. & 4. 4. & 33. *Iſa.* 41. 16. *Pſ.* 105. 3. And in very many other Places. So that it ſeems to me that we are now rather called to Praiſe and Thankſgiving, and to Glorifie God that way, and not by a continual ſorrow of Heart, and ſadneſs of Spirit, deter others from a Holy Life.

Conſi. Chriſtianity is the ſame now as it ever was, a Death to Sin, and a Life of Holineſs is required in every Diſciple of Chriſt, ſorrow for Sin, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt are conſiſtent together in the ſame ſubject

at the ſame time, *For as the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our Conſolation alſo aboundeth by Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 1. 5. Do you think that the primitive Chriſtians when they ſuffered Martyrdom had not as much Joy in their Hearts, and Praiſe and Thankſgivings in their Mouths as we have now a Days? Yes, verily, I believe they had, *The Apoſtles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Chriſt*, Acts 5. 41. Paul *and* Silus *ſang Praiſes unto God in the Inner Priſon when their Feet were faſt in the Stocks*, Acts 16. 25. *The Hebrews took joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods*, Heb. 10. 34. the Martyrs *Looked unto Jeſus who for the Joy that was ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 12. 2, Read the Hiſtories of the primitive, and of our late Martyrs, and you will find moſt of them ſinging Praiſes to God, and expreſſing themſelves with great

Joy

Joy and Thankfulneſs to him at the Stake for bringing them thither. St. *Paul* ſays to the Phillippians, *Yea, and if I be offered or poured forth upon the Sacrifice and Service of your Faith, I Joy and Rejoice with you all; for the ſame cauſe alſo do ye Joy and Rejoice with me*, Phill. 2. 17, 18.

Dou. I did not deny but that the primitive Chriſtians had the Joy of Faith and Comforts of the Holy Ghoſt in the time of their ſufferings as much as we, or perhaps more: But what I meant to ſay was, that they were called more to ſufferings, and we more to Praiſe and Thankſgivings.

Conf. It's true every Chriſtian is not called to Martyrdom actually, but habitually he is, that is to ſay he is to live in a conſtant Preparation for it, that he may be ready when God pleaſes to call him, *Watch therefore for you know not what Hour the Lord doth come*, Mat. 24. 42. and 25. 13. *He that hateth his Life in this World ſhall keep it unto Life Eternal*,

John

John 12. 35. *He that loseth his Life for my sake shall find it*, Mat. 10. 39. These and such like Scriptures being well considered make it plain that we must live in a Constant readiness to glorifie our Redeemer with our Bodies, Souls, and Spirits whensoever and after what manner soever he pleases to call us to it, *For we are not our own, we are bought with a Price, therefore we are to glorifie God in our Bodies, and in our Spirits which are Gods*, Rom. 6. 20. Besides a Continued series of self denial for 20 or 30 Years together, perhaps may be as great a Degree of Mortification, as laying down our Life at once for all: Who would not rather chuse to suffer Martyrdom, than to maintain a bloudy fight for 20 or 30 Years with his Lusts, cutting off right Hands and Feet, pulling out right Eyes, Running, Fighting, Striving, Wrestling, keeping our Bodies under, and bringing them into Subjection, dying daily, selling all we have and giving to

the Poor, enduring Reproachings and cruel Mockings patiently, keeping a conſtant ſtrict Watch over all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, reſiſting the Devil, Combating with Principallities and Powers, and Spiritual Wickedneſſes; turning a deaf Ear to all the blandiſhments and allurements of the World, and the Fleſh, reſiſting unto Blood, ſtriving againſt Sin, *&c.*

Dou. After our firſt Converſion, being born of God, and having received a new Nature; theſe Acts of Self-denial and Mortification in time become more eaſy to us, and as it were natural.

Conſi. But ſtill the Remains of Sin are in us, and will be as long as we live. The Fleſh will be luſting againſt the Spirit, and *The Spirit againſt the Fleſh, ſo that we cannot do the things that we would*, Gal. 5. 17. The *Canaanites* that were left in the Land were always Diſquieting, Enſnaring, Fighting againſt, and Oppreſſing the Children

Chiidren of *Iſrael*, and even ready ſometimes to overcome them: But when they repented of their Sins, and cried unto God for help, he was gracious, and merciful to them, and ſent them Deliverance, as you may read at large in the Book of *Judges*: So it is with the remains of Sin in us, we muſt be continually upon our watch againſt them, muſt keep on mortifying them more and more as long as we live, not make any the leaſt truce with them, muſt cry to God for help againſt them, and have a care of ſlumbering and ſleeping by ſloth and ſecurity, leſt the Oil of our Love and Faith and other Graces go out in our Lamps, and the Enemy gain advantage over us. For the old Man of Sin will ſtill be reviving in us, and is never totally mortified till Death, and then it is the Chriſtian ſhall enter into reſt, *He that ſhall endure to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved*, Mat. 24. 13. *Vincenti dabitur*, Rev. 2 and 3.

Dou.

Dou. Take heed that by preſſing Mortification ſo much as neceſſary to Salvation, you do not leſſen the Merits of Chriſt's Suffering for us.

Conſi. God forbid I ſhould, *'Twas he that trod the Wine-preſs alone, and of the People there was none with him, and he looked and there was none to help, therefore his own Arm brought Salvation*, Iſa. 63. *When we have done all we can, or that is commanded us, we are but unprofitable Servants*, Luke 17. 10. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our Righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags*, Iſa. 64. 6. *There is no Salvation in any other but Jeſus Chriſt; for there is none other name under Heaven given among Men whereby we muſt be ſaved*, Acts 4. 12. *By Grace we are ſaved thro' Faith, and that not of our ſelves, it is the Gift of God: Not of works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt*, Eph. 2. 8, 9. *'Twas Chriſt alone that puts away Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf, and was once offered to bear the Sins of many*, Heb.

Heb. 9. 26, 28. *'Twas he that ſuffered, the Juſt for the Unjuſt, that he might bring us to God,* 1 Pet. 3. 18. Who knew no Sin *yet was made Sin for us that we might be the Righteouſneſs of God in him,* 1 Cor. 5. 21. But tho' we cannot merit any thing by our Mortification, yet it is a neceſſary means for the purging out Sin, and healing that deadly Wound we received in our firſt Parents; our Sanctification in holineſs will gradually keep pace with our Mortification to Sin, what is it we would be ſaved from, but Sin the worſt of (and the procuring cauſe of) all Evils? and Sin is ſo inwrought in our old Man that without it's deſtruction, it can never be purged out. This Leproſie of Sin has ſo throughly contaminated theſe Houſes of our Bodies that without pulling them down they cannot be cleanſed, *Lev.* 14. St. *Paul* ſays, in the ſeventh of the *Romans, I know that in me, that is in my Fleſh, dwelleth no good thing. And O! wretch-*

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ed Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death. And the like in many other places, ſome of which I have mentioned already. And for this reaſon it is that God in mercy to us ſo often ſends us Afflictions, that by them we may be weaned from the World and deadned thereto, and may be *partakers of his Holineſs*, Heb. 12. That the Fleſh may be ſubdued, and our Affections Spiritualized, that the ſcales may fall from our Eyes, with which Sin, Satan and the World have blinded us, and that we may ſee plainly with the Eyes of Faith the realities of a future ſtate, and for many other Reaſons which I cannot ſtay now to name.

Dou. I doubt I have treſpaſſed on your Patience, and therefore I ſhall break off this Diſcourſe with the Words of St. *Paul*, Rom. 6. 4, 5. *Praying that we may be buried with Chriſt by Baptiſm into Death: That like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even*

ſo

ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of Life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his Death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his Reſurrection.

Confi. And I ſhall leave upon your Mind *Iſaiah* 25. verſe 8. *He will ſwallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People ſhall he take away from off all the Earth: For the Lord hath ſpoken it.*

Dou. The Grace of God be with you.

Confi. God be with you alſo, my dear Friend, Farewell.

DIA-

DIALOGUE III.

Between Eutocus *and* Fidelius, *about Natural things Spiritualized.*

Fidelius. LAst time I had the happineſs of an hours converſation with you, I remember how pleaſantly you diſcourſed about the Reſurrection of our Bodies by comparing it to, and illuſtrating it by Tranſmutations and Reſurrections (as it were) of other Bodies daily before our Eyes. You juſtly began with our Saviour and St. *Paul*'s comparing it to a Grain of Wheat thrown into the Earth, and there dying, and then riſing up again a new Body, *John* 12. 24. and 1 *Cor.* 15. 36, 37, 38.

You very well argued that if Man could out of the vileſt Vegitables as Kali, Ferne, &c. deſtroyed and reduced to Aſhes; and out of Sand, Pebbles and Stones, raiſe up again ſuch a fine, ſhining, ſolid, durable Body as Glaſs: How much eaſier could God perform what the Apoſtle ſays concerning the Reſurrection of the dead, *that it is ſown in Corruption, it is raiſed in Incorruption, it is ſown in Diſhonour, it is raiſed in Glory, it is ſown in Weakneſs, it is raiſed in Power, it is ſown a Natural Body, it is raiſed a Spiritual Body.*

Euto. God is ſo exceeding gracious to us, that almoſt all things in Nature if attended to, and rightly meditated upon by us, would put us in mind of our Death and Reſurrection again. The going down of the Sun, and Darkneſs ſucceeding, and the laying of our ſelves down in our Beds, ought to put us in mind of our Death and Burial; and the riſing of the Sun in the Morning, and our

raiſing

raiſing of our ſelves out of our Beds; is an Emblem of our Reſurrection. And after a cold, dark, diſmal Winter, wherein all Nature ſeems to be dead and buried; what can better repreſent to us the General Reſurrection, than the approach of the Sun, and the coming on of the Spring? The Birds round about us ſinging out the Praiſes of their Creator, muſt needs put us in Mind of what we hope will be our Buſineſs for ever. The Flowers riſing out of their Graves, and covering the Fields with a beautiful variety of Colours, the Trees putting on new Cloaths, and the Lambs skipping about for Joy, will naturally produce in our Thoughts the Reſurrection, the Judgment of the great Day, the Paradiſe from whence by our Sins we fell, and the Reſtoration to a better, wrought out for us by our Saviour in a Garden and upon the Croſs, *My Beloved ſpake and ſaid unto me, riſe up my Love, my fair one, and*

come away, for lo the Winter is past, the Rain is over, and gone, the flowers appear on the Earth, the time of the singing of Birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land, the Fig-Tree putteth forth her green Figs, and the Vines with the tender Grape give a good smell: Arise my love, my fair one and come away, Cant. 2. 10. and 13.

Fide. Thy dead Men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise: Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust: For thy dew is as the dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the dead, Isa. 26. 19.

Euto. Next to the Apostles comparison of the seeds of Vegitables, I know no more lively Representation of the Resurrection, than may be seen in Insects, such as the Silk-worm, and others, especially those that from a loathsome Worm after having suffered a kind of death become a beautiful Fly. And from terrestial commence aerial Creatures mounting up towards

towards Heaven with their Wings, and never after eating any of the Food they lived upon before their tranſmutation; the moſt beautiful Butter-Flies that we have are firſt Worms or Caterpillars feeding moſt commonly on the leaves of Plants, and when come to full growth lie ſick for a time as if dying, and by degrees are compaſſed round with a hard ſhell like a Coffin (called an *Aurelia*) painted with yellow ſtroaks like Gold, and commonly hung by a thread like ſilk to ſome of the branches of the Plant, where after it has hung the appointed time, the *Aurelia* opens and out comes the Butter-Fly.

Fide. O Lord how manifold are thy works? in Wiſdom haſt thou made them all, the Earth is full of thy riches, Pſ. 104. 24. but pray do all Worms become Flies?

Euto. No, not all, there are ſome earth Worms, and ſome few others do not; but I think all Flies are firſt

Eggs, then Worms, then after a ſort of death become Flies of almoſt innumerable different ſorts, ſhapes, and colours; ſome they call day Flies and ſome night Flies; ſome are beneficial to Man as the Silk-worm, Bees, Cocheneil, Cantharides, *&c.* Some noxious as Waſps, Hornets, fleſh Flies, Gnats, Locuſts, *&c.*

Fide. Are there no Emblems of the Reſurrection in larger Animals as well as in Inſects?

Euto. I cant call them Emblems of the Reſurrection, but certainly there are wonderful tranſmutations to be ſeen in Animals, as for Example, the Hay-ſeed rots in the Ground, by which means the Graſs ſprings up; the Lamb eats the Graſs, which is converted into his Blood, Fleſh, Bones and Spirits, Man feeds on the fleſh of the Lamb, which is again turned into his Fleſh, Blood, and Spirits; and thereby being united to a rational Soul, renders up the Praiſes of the whole Creation to God. The

Man

Man alſo feeding by *Faith* on the *Lamb* of God that takes away the ſins of the World, is changed into the likeneſs of an Angel. Thus the vegitable creature after Death is turned into the Animal, the Animal into the Rational, the Rational into the Spiritual Nature. *Unto thee O God do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: For that thy Name is near, thy wondrous Works declare*, Pſ. 75. 1.

Fide. I will ſpeak of the glorious Honour of thy Majeſty, and of thy wondrous Works, Pſal. 145. 5.

Euto. There's an analogy between things Spiritual and Corporal, ſo that by a right contemplation on Earthly Things, we may raiſe up our minds continually to Heavenly; for which we have the Example of our Saviour, who very frequently we find in the Goſpel teaching heavenly Myſteries by earthly Things, as by comparing himſelf to a Vine, and his Diſciples to the Branches. Himſelf to a Shepherd, his Diſciples to the

Sheep, himſelf to a Sower of good Seed, the good Seed to the Children of the Kingdom; and the Kingdom of Heaven he compares to a Treaſure hid in a Field, to a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, to Leaven hid in Meal, to a Net caſt into the Sea, to a Pearl of great Price; and many other things ſpake he in Parables and Similitudes, as may be ſeen in the Goſpels recorded at large for our Inſtruction. Likewiſe in the old Teſtament, God was pleaſed to ſet forth our Saviour in all his Offices, and in all his Benefits to the Faith of his People in various Types, Shadows, and Figures, the ſtudy whereof to this day is very uſeful for the better underſtanding of the Goſpel, and the Myſteries of our Salvation by Chriſt Jeſus.

Fide. You need not trouble your ſelf with naming any more Inſtances, for 'tis obvious to every Man in the leaſt converſant with the Scriptures, that every where Heavenly things are ſet forth by Earthly repreſentations;

ſentations; and that in great mercy and condeſcenſion to our Capacities, and Underſtandings, and as helps to our Faith. Our Saviour ſays, *If I have told you Earthly things and you believe not, how ſhall ye believe if I tell you Heavenly things?* John 3. 12. And I am well aſſured that if a Man will but conſider of the things before his Eyes, he can never be an Atheiſt or Idolater. *For the inviſible things of God, from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and God-head,* Rom. 1. 20. Thus our Reaſon if attending to the conſideration of the Creation, and the beauty, order and preſervation of all things, muſt needs conclude that there is a God the maker and preſerver of all theſe things, and that there is but one God, and that he is to be Worſhipped, as our Maker, and Preſerver, and to be loved above all things as our only Benefactor: But now when we find in

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our ſelves that we do not perform that Love and Obedience due to him; and not only fail in our Duty, but rebel againſt him, being vain in our Imaginations, and to every good Work reprobates, loving the Creature more than the Creator, and filled with all unrighteouſneſs. Our Conſciences alſo bearing witneſs againſt us, and our Thoughts accuſing us, that we have not performed the Law of Nature. And knowing the Judgment of God that they that commit ſuch things are worthy of Death, not only do the ſame, but take pleaſure in them that do them. And finding our ſelves in this miſerable plight, is there any thing to be ſeen or found in the whole Creation that may lead our Minds towards a Cure, and how to obtain pardon for what is paſt, and the return of the favour of God, and more ſtability for the future in our Love and Obedience to him?

Euto. No ſurely, For if there had been any ſuch thing in Nature for

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our first Parents to have grounded their Hopes upon, they would have found it out, being better skill'd in Natural things than we are; and not have fled and hid themselves. But after God had given them the Promise of the Messiah, and instructed them in, and accepted of their Offerings and Sacrifices, no doubt but they saw by the Eye of Faith the Messiah Typified under them; *as is said, that Abel by faith offered unto God a more Excellent sacrifice than Cain*, Heb. 11. 4. and so forward, still more and more, God was pleased to reveal the Saviour of Mankind to the World under earthly Types and Shadows till his coming. And our Saviour himself used much to instruct his People in heavenly Mysteries, under earthly Representations, as I said before, and instanced in some few Things. It is said in the Gospel, Mat. 13. 34. *All these things spake Jesus unto the Multitude in Parables, and without a Parable spake he not to them.*

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But then he interpreted them all to his Disciples if they desired it. And so will the Holy Ghost to us now, if we pray for it.

Fide. When I see the Innocent Beasts slain, that we may live, I presently think of the Lamb of God that was slain to give Life to the World. When I see Bread, I think of the Bread of Life that came down from Heaven, and giveth Life to the World. When I see Water, I think of the Water of Life, of being born of Water, and of the Spirit, of washing of Regeneration, *&c.* when I see the Earth I think what I was made of; The Stones puts me in mind of my hard Heart; the Trees, of the Tree of Life, and the blessed Man mentioned, *Ps.* 1. The Herbs, Grass and Flowers of the Field, that all Flesh is Grass, and the Glory of Man as the Flower of Grass, the Grass withereth, and the Flower soon falleth. And when I look upwards, the Heavens declare the glo-

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ry of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his Handy-work. The Sun minds me of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and of the Righteous ſhining as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father: The Moon of the mutability of all things; and the Stars of our Saviour who is called a Star ariſing out of *Jacob*, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs ſhall ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever. The King and Nobility puts me in mind of the King of Kings, and Lord of Hoſts. The Judge and Priſoners minds me of the great Judgment at the Laſt Day: And ſo I could name a hundred other viſible Things that naturally lead our Minds to ſpiritual and inviſible Things; but when I run my Meditations farther and deeper in theſe Reſemblances and Similitudes, ſo as to find out by them how we receive the Spirit, how Faith is formed in us, how we are New-born, how we die to Sin and live to God by Faith, *&c.*

I find

I find my ſelf at a loſs, and earthly Similitudes fail me, or at leaſt my dull Imagination, and want of Experience cannot carry on the Compariſons far enough.

Eut. Similitudes do not correſpond in every Circumſtance to the Things to which they are compared, but muſt be conſidered in Relation to that particular Property about which the Compariſon is made. Thus Water ſignifies ſometimes the Graces of the Holy Spirit, and at other times Afflictions. Our Saviour is called a chief Corner and Foundation Stone, in relation to Believers; and a Stone of ſtumbling in regard to the Diſobedient, and in the Parable of the Sower, *Mat.* 13. the Seed is called the Word; and in another Parable it is called the Children of the Kingdom; in another Place the Word is compared to Milk, and again it is called the Sword of the Spirit, *&c.* So that if we would meditate aright on the Analogy between Spiri-

Spiritual and Corporeal Things, we muſt call to mind to what, and how many Things Corporeal the Spirit of God in the Scriptures has directed our Meditations to, for our better underſtanding of one ſpiritual Truth; as for Example, If we would meditate upon what I laſt named, the Word of God. Firſt, I conſider it as the Sword of the Spirit, able if believed in, to deſtroy all my Spiritual Enemies, *For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper then any two edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow*, Heb iv. 12. And now I conſider alſo my Enemies with which I am to combat, and I find them very ſtrong, no leſs than the World, the Fleſh and the Devil, and all the Principalities and Powers of ſpiritual Wickedneſſes; yet they muſt all fall before this Sword as managed by the Spirit: but then I muſt put on my Armour, *viz.* the Helmet of Salvation,

vation, the Shield of Faith, the Breaſtplate of Righteouſneſs, &c. and muſt ſtand to it, and fight valiantly, obeying the Word in every Thing, and looking up by Faith to the Captain of my Salvation, who when he was tempted by Satan in the Wilderneſs, overcame him by this Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Then I conſider the Word as it is Milk for Babes, and ſtrong Meat for grown Men; and I think, that as the Meat being digeſted in my Stomach turns into Chyle, and from that to Blood, out of which the Spirits are generated, which give Strength and Activity to the animal Man, and they being governed by the rational Soul, produce in me all the Actions of a Natural Man; ſo the Word being received into my rational Soul by Faith, and digeſted by Meditation and Prayer, proves proper Nouriſhment for the Growth of the New-Man, by which the Graces of the Spirit thrive and increaſe,

creaſe, my Mind is illuminated, my will inclined to that which is Good, and my Affections ſanctified and ſet upon right Objects, and the whole Man being governed by the Spirit of God, *Increaſeth with the Increaſe of God, till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*, Eph. iv. 13.

Fid. You argue very well, *For Man doth not live by Bread only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord doth Man live*, Deut. viii. 3. Mat. *and* Luke iv. 4. and this was one of the Words with which our Saviour overcame the Devil.

Eut. I proceed to meditate on the Word as it is compared to Seed ſown in the Earth, and in the firſt place the Parable ſhews us that we ought to take great Care how we hear the Word of God, and prepare our Hearts to receive it; conſidering of

the four Grounds mentioned by our Saviour, on which the Seed was ſown, but one proved good; and the Reaſon of it is told us by our Saviour in the Explanation of the Parable, *Mat.* xiii. *Mark* iv. *Luke* viii. which deſerves a particular Meditation by it's ſelf; and therefore, at preſent, I confine my ſelf to my firſt Intention, which was to conſider the likeneſs between the Word of God, and Seed ſown in the Ground. The Seeds of all Plants conſiſt of two Parts; the firſt, outward, bulky and large, making up the greater part of the Seed, and is of groſſer, more earthy Parts than the Second Part, which is very ſmall, and for the moſt part inviſible to the naked Eye; but in larger Seeds, ſuch as Beans, *&c.* may be ſeen to be nothing elſe but the Plant it ſelf in Minature; at leaſt there is the Root and ſome of the firſt Leaves already formed, and the Growth ſeems to be only the Exfoliation, Expanſion, or Enlargement of this

this Plant, for which end the outward part of the Seed ſerves for nouriſhment to the little inward Plant till it takes Root in the Ground, and then it receives its Nouriſhment from thence till it comes to it's full growth, when the fineſt Porticles are ſeparated for forming of new Seed in the Seed Veſſel; at which time the Apices on the tops of the Stamina having firſt imbued a vital, ſpiritous, Cœleſtial Principal from the Sun, ſhed abroad their Duſt, whereby the Seed is impregnated, and becomes fruitful: After which when the Seed is throughly formed, and dryed, it drops off. Thus the Word accompanied with the holy Spirit, being ſown in our Hearts and there received by Faith as into good Ground, takes Root in our Heart and draws our Reaſon, Will, Judgment, Affections, and all other Faculties of our Souls as it were into the Nouriſhment of this new Plantation, whereby aſpiring above the Earth, and there meeting

ing with the Bleſſed Influences of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and the Dew of the Graces of God's Spirit, it ſoon grows up to bear Fruit to the glory of God, and good of others. I have only hinted to you generals, and leave the purſuance of the Similitude in each Particular to your own private Meditations.

Fide. You mind me of our Saviour's Words in John 6.63. *The words that I ſpeak unto you they are Spirit and they are Life.* *And that of the* Pſalmiſt 119. 50. *Thy word hath Quickned me.* *And that of* John 15. 7. *if my words abide in you, ye ſhall ask what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you,* &c. I believe indeed that our Saviour's Similitudes are the moſt apt and pertinent reſemblances of the things compared to, as can be found in Nature; and therefore ought to be duly weighed in our Minds: And not be put off by ſaying it was the Manner and Cuſtom of ſpeaking in Ancient times, and in

thoſe Eaſtern Countries to illuſtrate a little what they had to ſay. For my part, I believe there is a great Analogy between the New Birth and the natural Birth, the Life of Faith, and the natural Life, the Death in Sin, and the bodily Death, and ſo of all the reſt of the Similitudes, and Parables that our Saviour ſpoke; they ought to be duly conſidered of, and their ſpiritual meaning be ſought out by deep Meditation and Prayer.

Eut. I pray God give us Underſtanding ſo to do, but at preſent I am called away. God have you in his good keeping my dear *Fidelé.*

Fid. And you alſo my dear *Eutoché.*

DIALOGUE IV.

Between Simplicius *and* Conſocius, *about Union.*

Simpl. WHat is the Union between Chriſt and Believers? For that there is ſuch a thing the Scriptures are every where plain and poſitive, as *John* xiv. 20. *At that Day ye ſhall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* And xvii. 20. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo, which ſhall believe on me through their Word: That they all may be one as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us.* 1 Cor. xii. 12. *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body: So alſo is Chriſt.* And, Verſe 27. *Now*

you

you are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular. And, vi. 17. *He that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit.* And Twenty other Places could I easily name (if needful) to prove the Thing. And oh! that I could feelingly and fruitfully experience it in my self.

Conso. We are united unto Jesus Christ by his Spirit quickening us, strengthening us, comforting us, and abiding in us, *John* vi. 63. and xiv. 26. 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. *Eph.* iii. 16. 1 *John* iii. 24. Like as the Spirits in the natural Body, descend from the Head into all the Members, giving them Life, Strength and Motion to perform all the Actions of Life: Or like as the Vine communicates to the Branch that vital Juice whereby it grows and bears Fruit: so the Spirit of Christ descending into the Hearts, Minds and Souls of Believers, unites them unto himself the Head, causing them to grow and increase in Grace, and to bear Fruit to his Glory.

Simpl. How do we receive the Spirit?

Conſo. By Faith in hearing the Word of God, and Prayer to God, who has promiſed to give his Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him. *Received ye the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith,* Gal. iii. 2. Our firſt Parents hearkening to the Words of the Devil, and aſſenting thereto, and diſobeying the Word of God, incurred the threatned penalty of Death, Loſt the Image of God, were diſunited from him, and became in a great meaſure like to Satan himſelf, and in union with him; as our Saviour told the unbelieving Jews, *You are of your Father the Devil, and the Luſts of your Father ye will do,* John viii. 44. And all the Deſcendants from *Adam* being involved in the ſame Guilt and Miſery, as being then in his Loyns, and iſſuing from him as Streams from a corrupt Fountain, or Branches from a Tree, muſt all with him have miſe-

miſerably periſh'd together with the Devil and his Angels; if God in his infinite Mercy and Wiſdom had not found out a Ranſom, a Saviour for us, even the eternal Word, who was firſt promiſed to our firſt Parents in *Gen.* iii. 15. and continues to be preached to us to this Day, *That if we believe in him we ſhall not periſh but ſhall have everlaſting Life.* He took our Nature upon him thereby uniting himſelf to us; and became a Man like unto us in all things, Sin only excepted, and offered up himſelf an Expiatory Sacrifice for our Sins, whereby the Juſtice of God is ſatisfied, and Proclamation made throughout the World, that whoſoever believes in him, repents of Sin, and obeys his Word, ſhall receive his Spirit, be united to him, be juſtified, ſanctified, and finally ſaved, and thus comes about our Union to him, by his taking our Nature, and our receiving his, by Faith, *The Words that I ſpeak unto you, they*

they are Spirit, and they are Life, John vi. 63. *The first Man Adam was made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit*, 1 Cor. xv. 45.

Simpl. Methinks the Union between Christ and his Church is very fitly represented by a Temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, wherein Christ is the Foundation and Corner Stone, and Believers *as lively Stones are built up a Spiritual House, an holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. *And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone; in whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord, in whom you also are builded together for an Habit ation of God through the Spirit*, Eph. ii. 21, 22.

Conso. Right; and no less elegantly is it set forth by a Marriage where the

the Husband engages himſelf to his Wife to be wholly hers, to endow her with all his worldly Goods, to protect, nouriſh, and love her, &c. And the Wife gives her conſent to be wholly her Husbands, forſaking all others, and promiſing to love, obey and honour him as long as ſhe lives: And from ſuch Union reſults a communion or commutation of Properties, ſo that all the Man is or has, is his Wife's; and all the Woman is or has, is the Husband's. In like manner, when we give our Conſent to be the Lord's, we give up our ſelves wholly to him, and all that we have, or are, our Lives, Eſtates, Profits, Pleaſures, Honours, natural or acquired Endowments, and whatſoever elſe we are, or have that we call our own; breaking off from, and forſaking all other Lovers, oppoſing and fighting to the laſt Gaſp againſt the World, the Fleſh and the Devil; and cleaving to him with our whole Heart as a chaſt Spouſe for ever,

ever, loving, honouring, ſerving, and obeying him with our whole Heart, Mind, and Soul, and he on the other Hand promiſes to be ours, our Husband, our Lord, our King, to protect us, to love us, to govern, and teach us, to be unto us Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, to give us his Spirit and all the bleſſed Fruits thereof; to pardon all our Sins for the ſake of his own Merits and Satisfaction, to give us Grace here, and Glory hereafter, and having given himſelf for us, and to us, no good Thing will he withhold from us conducible to our Holineſs here, and happineſs hereafter. *This is a great Myſtery, but I ſpeak concerning Chriſt and the Church*, Eph. v. 32.

Simp. Both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one, for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them Brethren, Heb. ii. 11. God grant that both you and I may may come to this Marriage

of

of the King's Son, putting on by Faith the Wedding Garment of his Righteouſneſs, and adorned with the Jewles of the Graces of his Spirit. But now pray tell me if you can, how the Soul is united to the Body.

Con. Truly that is more than I can do, any farther than what we experience in our ſelves, and the Word of God declares to us in the Scripture, as in *Gen.* 2. 7. *It is ſaid, and the Lord God formed man of the duſt of the Ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life; and man became a living ſoul.* By which we underſtand that our Souls are of noble Extraction, and not formed of the Earth as our Bodies are; and that they are immortal may be proved from that place of Scripture where our Saviour bids us not *to fear them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul,* Mat. 10. 28. as well as many other Places; and are endowed with excellent Faculties,

culties, ſuch as Reaſoning, Judging, Willing, *&c.* and are as it were married to our Bodies in a very intimate Union; the Body is alſo a Habitation for the Soul to dwell in, and an inſtrument whereby ſhe puts in Execution her reſolves.

Sim. I fancy the Union between Soul and Body may be likened to a Man driving a Chariot, where the Man is the Soul, the Chariot, the Body, and the Horſes the Animal Spirits; or to a Ship Sailing in the Sea, where the Ship may be compared to the Body, the Sailors to the Vital and Animal Spirits, and the Pilot to the Soul.

Con. It ſeems to me as if Nature performed all her Operations by the Union of ſomething Cœleſtial with Terreſtial Matter; as perhaps the Sun Beams being entangled and impriſoned in the earthy matter of a Plant, and being of a volitile active Nature, forces their way where they find leaſt Reſiſtance, and ſo cauſe

the

the Extention and growth of the Plant, in ſuch form and faſhion as the little mould or planticle contained in the Seed directs, or limits them to: And when the Plant is come to its full growth, may Continue the Circulation of it's Sap like the Blood in Animals.

Sim. And what think you of Animals, may it not be ſo with them?

Con. Perhaps it may, but then as the Plant receives it's earthly ſubſtance (a little mixt with the Etherial) chiefly by the Root, and it's Etherial by the Pores, or Leaves: So the Animal feeding on Herbs or Fleſh, chiefly receives it's earthly Parts that way, together with what ſpiritous Particles are entangled with them; but moſtly receives it's Cœleſtial, ſpiritious, active Particles from the Air by its Breath, which are ſqueeſed out of the Air by the Lungs and mixt with the Blood, and by that Vehicle carried through the

Body

Body to their proper Secretory Glands.

Sim. Theſe are but Suppoſitions or Gueſſes, and nothing Concluſive from them can be depended on.

Con. I readily acknowledg them ſo to be; yet certainly there is a Communication between heavenly and earthly Bodies, as the Pſalmiſt ſays of the Sun, *there is nothing hid from the heat thereof* Pſa. 19. 6. ſo that it's Beams may, for ought I know, perſuade to the very Center of the Earth; and no living Creature could long ſubſiſt without it's influence, what are Foggs and Vapours, but Rays of the Sun-beams, entangled in Water, and carring little Particles of the Water up along with them? what is Fire it ſelf but a diſent Anglement of the Cœleſtial from the Earthly Matter which were before untied in the Fuel and the Air?

Sim. Theſe Things are too hard for us, our dull Underſtandings are not capable of apprehending how ſpiritual

ſpiritual Subſtances are united to Corporeal Matter, ſo as to make one intelligent Being, reſulting from both; altho' we perceive it in our ſelves ſo to be, yet how it is brought to paſs, we are ignorant, at leaſt I am.

Con. And ſo am I; and not only of that, but alſo of the Strict Union or Adheſion together of matter meerly Earthly, ſuch as Stones, Gold, Diamonds, *&c.* How then can human Reaſon pretend to the Comprehenſion of the great myſtery of the Incarnation of our Saviour, and of the Incomprehenſible Trinity in Unity?

Sim. What I find in the Holy Scriptures, I firmly believe, and tho' it tranſends my comprehenſion, and Reaſon; yet it is moſt reaſonable for me to believe it becauſe Truth it's ſelf has ſaid it.

Con. Well, whatſoever my Soul is, and howſoever conjoined to this Body of Clay, I find they now are

both one; and tho' they may, and will be ſeperated again for a little time, yet both will by the mighty Power of God meet again, and be reconjoyned: When being purged from all Sin, they ſhall both ſee God, and enjoy everlaſting Happineſs with him for ever. And for the preſent, I will do my Endeavour to keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection to the Dictates of my rational Soul, looking unto Jeſus my Saviour, by Faith, for his quickning, directing, and ſtrengthing Spirit, ſo to govern both according to his Word, that I may glorifie him in my Body and Spirit, which are his, being bought with the price of his own Blood.

Sim. Pray for me my dear Friend, that I may alſo ſo reſolve, and do.

Con. May the very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly: And I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Chriſt. Faithful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it.

DIALOGUE V.

Between Thlipſius *and* Melandrus, *about Afflictions.*

Thlipſius. O *Menandre!* How often have I pitied and prayed for you, how often counceled, adviſed, and even reproved you for Impatience under your Afflictions? But now it is come upon my ſelf, I am far more impatient, and leſs reſigned than you; ſo eaſy it is to give Counſel, and hard to take it.

Melandrus. I have heard of your Misfortune, and do heartily Condole with you: But what if I ſhould ſay to you now, I wiſh you Joy of it;

for certainly if it be not your own Fault, it will turn to your Good in the End, God being ſo good and gracious as to cauſe all Things *to work together for good to them that love him*, Rom. viii. 28. *Affliction cometh not forth of the Duſt, neither doth Trouble ſpring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble as the ſparks fly upward. I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe*, Job v. 6, 7, 8. It is God that ſends us all our Afflictions, and always for wiſe, good, and gracious Ends, ſometimes for the tryal of our Faith, and exerciſe of our Graces; at other times as a fatherly Chaſtiſement for Sin, that we may examine our ſelves, and ſearch and try our Ways, and repent and amend our Lives; he is the good Phyſician that knows when to give the bitter Potion, and when to adminiſter the Cordial.

Thlip. I own all this to be true, yet I muſt needs ſay with the Apoſtle,

ſtle, *No chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous.*

Melan. Nevertheleſs afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs unto them which are exerciſed thereby, wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, Heb. xii. 11, 12.

Thlip. All the days of the afflicted are evil, Pro. xv. 15.

Melan. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes, Pſ. cxix. 71.

Thlip. What is my Duty now under this Affliction, Pray tell me plainly and faithfully, for you have had much Experience in this matter.

Melan. God forbid that I ſhould not be faithful and friendly to you in giving my beſt Advice both as to your Duty and Comfort; and tho' I am ſure you know theſe things as well as my ſelf, yet ſince you are deſirous to ſee if my Sentiments are agreeable with yours, I ſhall freely adviſe you to quiet your ſelf all that

ever you are able, that your Prayers and other Duties be not broken and interrupted, ſeek earneſtly to God for a meek and quiet Spirit, and never leave till you can ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Surely I have behaved and quieted my ſelf as a child that is weaned of his mother, my ſoul is even as a weaned child*, Pſ. cxxxi. 2. Forgive the Inſtruments in bringing about your Affliction, or that continue, or increaſe it any manner of way according to our Saviour's Command and Example. Reſign your ſelf wholly up to the Will of God, not only as he is your Maker and Preſerver, and you a ſinful, ill-deſerving Rebel; but alſo as he is your reconciled God and Father in Jeſus Chriſt, and will not hurt you, but deſigns your Good in all the Diſpenſations of his Providence towards you; to whoſe Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, and Mercy in Jeſus Chriſt, according to his Promiſes in the Goſpel, you reſigned your ſelf up, when

firſt

firſt you believed; and therefore ſee that you ſtand ſtedfaſt to it now; for God is infinitely Wiſe, and knows what is beſt for you, which you do not. Read over the Examples of the Patriarchs, the Prophets, our Saviour, the Apoſtles, the Martyrs, the Primitive Chriſtians, and other Saints down to this Day, and ſee if Afflictions in this World have not been the Lot of them all, and why then ſhould you be exempt? unleſs you have a mind to withdraw your ſelf from the Conduct of infinite Wiſdom, and put your ſelf under your own Conduct to your utter Ruin. The way to the Crown is by the Croſs. You cannot Conquer, unleſs you fight; you can't win the Race, unleſs you run: Nor enter in at the ſtrait Gate without ſtriving. Examine your ſelf ſtrictly, eſpecially in relation to Sins both of Omiſſion and Commiſſion towards God, your Neighbour, and your own Soul, and repent and reform; and be very par-

ticular therein; for moſt commonly ſome Sin indulged, or Duty omitted, is the cauſe of our trouble. Ponder alſo well upon the Ends for which God ſends Afflictions upon his People, ſuch as fatherly Chaſtiſement for their Amendment, for the Increaſe and Exerciſe of their Graces, ſuch as Faith, Patience, Humility, Meekneſs, Dependance on him, *&c.* for Proof or Tryal of their Faith, for purging out of Sin, for weaning them from this World, and making them long for their Reſt in the heavenly *Canaan*; and to be willing to depart that they may be for ever with the Lord. To make you more conſtant, earneſt, and importunate in Prayer, and more ſerious in hearing the Word; to make you more Humble, Meek, Charitable, and Merciful, in reſpect of your Relations and Neighbours, and Compaſſionate towards other Sufferers; and many other good Ends God in his Wiſdom has for exerciſing his Peo-

ple

ple in the School of Afflictions, which the Scriptures and your own Experience will teach you. You are to conſider farther, that Afflictions are a great Proof of the Love of God towards you, as his Word abundantly manifeſts; and the Experience of the Saints in all Ages have atteſted to the Truth thereof. Laſtly, It is your Duty to praiſe God for afflicting you, and giving you ſuch Marks of his Favour, and fatherly care of you, and to rejoyce in the Lord, and glory in Tribulation, and comfort your ſelf up with his Promiſes of which the Bible is full, and moſt mercifully and wonderfully adapted to all the Caſes of his afflicted Children; eſpecially that it is an Article of God's gracious Covenant, *That if his Children forſake his Law and walk not in his Judgments, if they keep not his Commandments*, &c. *that then he will viſit their Tranſgreſſions with a Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes: Neverthelеſs his*

loving

loving kindneſs he will not utterly take away, nor break his Covenant, &c. as you may read at large in *Pſ.* lxxxix. 2 *Sam.* vii.

Thlip. Pardon me Dear Sir I ſay, that all along in your Advice, I obſerve, that you have quoted very few Scriptures, and have ſhortned even this laſt.

Melan. Truly my Memory failed me there, and I was afraid of being teadious, and taking up too much time; beſides I know that your Memory is better than mine, and that you are not unacquainted with the Scriptures your ſelf.

Thlip. Say it be ſo (which I will not Grant) yet I Love to here Scripture Proofs for Every Thing, for upon the Word of God I can depend; but what Men call rational Deductions or Inferences from thence, are not always infallible.

Melan. Come on then, Aſſiſt me, and let us call to remembrance one or two Texts of Scripture upon each

Head

Head of my Advice, for if we ſhould pretend to quote them all, we ſhould never have done. And firſt, concerning your Duty of Reſignation to the Will of God. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth, he ſiteth alone and keepeth ſilence, becauſe he hath born it upon him, he putteth his mouth in the duſt, if ſo be there may be hope*, Lam. iii. 26, 27, 28. *In your patience poſſeſs your ſouls*, Luke 21. 19. *And Job ſaid the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21. And again, *ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil? in all this did not Job ſin with his lips*, Job 2. 10. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*, Micah 7. 9. *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am therewith to be content*, Phil. 4. 11.

Thlip. Enough upon that Head, now for the neceſſity, and univerſality of Afflictions.

Melan.

Melan. *He who departeth from eveil maketh himſelf a pray*, Iſa. 59. 15. *Let no man be moved by theſe afflctions, for your ſelves know that we are appointed thereto*, 1 Theſ. iii. 3. *We muſt through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*, Acts xiv. 22. *All who will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 Tim. iii. 12. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his Diſciples if any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs and follow me*, Matth. xvi. 24.

Thlip. And for the Ends.

Melan. *Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, knowing that the tryal of your faith worketh patience*, James. i. 2. and i. 12. *Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of life. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a ſeaſon if need be, ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations, that the tryal of your faith being much*

much more precious than of Gold that perisheth though it be tryed with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. *The Lord thy God led thee forty years in the Wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee,* Deut. viii. 2. *By this therefore shall the Iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin,* Isa. xxvii. 9. *And some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge, and to make them white,* Dan. xi. 35. *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them, I will say it is my people, and they shall say, the Lord is my God,* Zech. xiii. 9. *There was given to me a Thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure,* 2 Cor. xii. 7.

Thlip.

Thlip. You ſaid you would quote but a Scripture or two upon each Head, but here you ſeem to have forgot your ſelf.

Melan. Not ſo, for the ends of Afflictions being many, I only quote a Scripture or Two upon each.

Thlip. Go on then.

Melan. He ſuffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna (which thou knewеſt not, neither did thy fathers know) that he might make thee know that man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live, Deut. viii. 3. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn thy ſtatutes,* Pſa. 119. 71. *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God who raiſes the dead,* 2 Cor. i. 9. *We which live are always delivered unto death for Jeſus ſake, that the life alſo of Jeſus might be made manifeſt in our mortal fleſh,* 1 Cor. iv. 11.

iv. 11. *This Sickneſs is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the ſon of God might be glorified thereby,* Joh. xi. 3. *The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew,* Exod. i. 12. *In there affliction they will ſeek me early,* Hoſ. v. 15. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death! I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord,* Rom. vii. 24, 25. *If we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection, knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin,* Rom. vi. 5, 6. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray,* Pſa. 119. 67. *When we are Judged we are chaſtned of the Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world,* 1 Cor. xi. 32.

Thlip. Now it Remains only for you to prove, that they are the Tokens

kens of God's Love; and that therefore we ought to rejoice in them, and comfort our ſelves with the Apprehenſions of the great Benefits we ſhall receive by them.

Melan. Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſtneſt, O Lord and teacheſt him out of thy Law, Pſa. xciv. 12. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the ſon in whom he delighteth,* Prov. iii. 12. *If you be without chaſtiſement whereof all are partakers then are you baſtards, and not ſons,* Heb. xii. 8. *He chaſtens us for our profit that we may be partakers of his holineſs,* Heb. xii. 10. *Moſt gladly will I therefore glory in my infirmities that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me, therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions for Chriſts ſake, for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong,* 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. *They who ſow in tears, will reap in joy,* Pſa. cxxvi. 5. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh*

worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, Rev. iii. 19. *Beloved think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal, which is to try you as if ſome ſtrange thing happened to you: But rejoyce in as much as you are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings*, 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation find away to eſcape that you may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. x. 13. *He doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men*, Lam. iii. 33. *The God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus, after that you have ſuffered a while, make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you*, 1 Pet. v. 10. And thus I have quoted a few texts of Scripture relating to Afflictions, and but a few in compariſon with what the holy Scriptures abound: I need not refer you

to the Book of *Job*, or to the lives of the Patriarchs, especially of *Joseph*, nor to the bitter Complaints of *David*, *Heman*, and other Psalmists, to be met with in the Book of Psalms, together with the strong Consolations of the holy Ghost intermixt with their Sufferings. I need not put you in mind of the Sufferings of St. *Paul*, which you will find in his Epistles, and the Acts of the Apostles: Because I do not speak to one that is Ignorant of the Scriptures.

Thlip. I thank you for your Advice, which you have proved to be good by the infallible Word of God: and may he be graciously pleased to increase my Faith and trust therein, and I will do my endeavour to make his Word the Rule of my Behaviour under my present Sufferings. I will also consider the Histories of the Saints of all Ages, and see how the Holy Ghost witnesseth that Bonds and Afflictions did abide them while they were in this Life. *Mel.*

Mel. Above all, remember the Example of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who was deſpiſed and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief; oppreſſed and afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth: He was brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his Mouth, *&c. Iſa.* liii. Let us imitate him in all his imitable Vertues, and obſerve his Commands, in denying our ſelves, taking up our Croſſes, and following him; *Remembring the Word that he ſaid unto us, the ſervant is not greater than the lord,* John xv. 20. *Who left us an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps, who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatned not; but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly,* 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23.

Thlip. Little Reaſon indeed have I to complain of my Sufferings for my own Sins, when I ſee the Lord of Glory enduring the utmoſt Shame; the Fountain and Giver of Life ſubmitting to the moſt painful Death; and that not for his own Sins, but for mine. O bleſſed Jeſus give me to love thee, to believe in thee, to obey thee, and quietly to reſign to thy infinitely wiſe and gracious Conduct, and Diſpoſal, all my temporal, and future Concerns, both for this Life, and that which is to come.

Mel. It's none of the leaſt Benefits that we receive by Afflictions, that they make us conſiderate. If we had no Croſſes, we ſhould grow Proud, Inſolent, Injurious, Senſual, forgetful of God, and another World, as we ſee too many are, who 'tis to be feared, have their Portion only in this Life; and therefore ſince there is a neceſſity for our Afflictions, as is hinted in the 1 *Pet.* i. 6. and that God does not willingly afflict nor

grieve

grieve us, *Lam.* iii. 33. and that he will ſupport us under them all, *Iſa.* xliii. 2. and that he will lay upon us no more than what we are able to bear, 1 *Cor.* x. 13. that they are a certain token of God's Love to us, *Rev.* iii. 19. and are altogether for our Good, as has been proved by many Scriptures; why then ſhould we be caſt down, and our Souls diſquieted in us; let us truſt in God, and his Promiſes; let us rejoyce in the Lord always, *Phil.* iv. 4. Let us glory in our Infirmities that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon us, 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. and count it all Joy when we fall into divers Temptations, for our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.

Thlip. I thank you for your Counſel, and will do my endeavour to obſerve it. This is not our place of Reſt, but of running, fighting, ſtriving, &c. *There remains a reſt for*

the People of God. Our Saviour invites all *that labour, and are heavy laden to come unto him, and he will give us reſt,* Mat. xi. 28. This Life is chequored with Good, and Evil, like the World we live in, that has as much Darkneſs as Light; at one time we have the Sunſhine of God's Favour, at other times nothing but Clouds, and Darkneſs, Storms and Tempeſts round about us: Now perhaps we may have Peace of Conſcience, Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, ſome aſſurance of Faith, *&c.* that we are ready to ſay we ſhall never be moved, and by and by perhaps God withdraws the Light of his Countenance, and Oh diſmal! What Darkneſs and Horrour, Doubts, and Fears, Temptations and Injections of Satan ſucceeds, that we cry out with the Diſciples, *Lord ſave us we periſh,* Mat. viii. 25.

Mel. And all theſe Things come upon us, not perhaps, or by chance; but by the all-wiſe Diſpoſal of a moſt graci-

gracious God, and all for our Good: We count them happy which endure; *You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender Mercy*, Jam. v. 11. *And that though weeping may continue for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning*, Pſ. xxx. 5.

Thlip. I muſt take my leave of you. The Lord give us the Oyl of Joy, for Mourning, the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs; *That we may come to Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon our heads, where we ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away*, Iſa. xxxv. ult.

Mel. Amen. God be with you my good Friend.

DIALOGUE VI.

Between Athanasius *and* Biotes, *about Death.*

Atha. I Would not have the Seperartion of our Soul and Body for a time, be called death as it commonly is; but rather sleep, according to the Example of our Saviour who called it by that Name, *Luke* viii. 52. *John* xi. 11. And the Apostle frequently as, 1 *Cor.* xv. 51. and 1 *Thes.* iv. 14, &c. And the Primitive Christians used to call their Church-yards or Burying-places Dormitories.

Bio.

Bio. Indeed, ſince *Chriſt hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Goſpel*, I think we may and ought to uſe ſome more comfortable Word, and more expreſſive of our Faith and Hope in Chriſt, than Death; which tho' I confeſs it be uſed both in the old and new Teſtament for the end of this preſent mortal Life, as well in relation to the Righteous as Wicked; yet ſince there is an Eternal Death, a Second Death called in the *Revelations* 20. 15. *a Lake of fire*, compared with 2. 11. from which Chriſt has delivered us: Since alſo the Scriptures furniſh us plentifully with other Words ſignifying the the ſame thing as Temporal Death, we are ſurely at liberty to uſe which we pleaſe.

Atha. I know it is called by many other Names in Scripture, ſuch as giving up the Ghoſt, returning to Duſt, reſting from Labour, putting off this Tabernacle, departure, going

to

to our Fathers, and People, going the way whence we ſhall not return, &c. but let us conſider it a little as it is called ſleep which it much reſembles, for as a Man being tired and fatigued with the buſineſs, and labour of the day, lays him down in his Bed and falls aſleep, and is as it were dead as long as he ſleeps ſound, motion ceaſes, he perceives no external Objects, no worldly Cares trouble him, unleſs perhaps in a Dream: And when he wakes in the morning he finds himſelf a new Man, invigorated with freſh Spirits, his Thoughts return to him again in order as he left them the Night before, and he chearfully ſets about the labour of the new day. So a Chriſtian having been haraſſed moſt part of his life with continual conflicts with the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh, and throughly tired with Temptations and Vexations on all ſides, gladly lays himſelf down to reſt in the Grave: And when he awakes in the morning

ning of the Reſurrection what inexpreſſible joy muſt he needs be ſeized with when he ſhall find his vile Body changed into the likeneſs of the glorious Body of his Saviour, *Phil.* 3: 21. *We know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is,* 1 John 3. 2.

Bio. Somnus ut eſt mortis, ſic lectus Imago Sepulchri. With what Faith, and fervency ought we to commit our Souls and Bodies into the hands of their Creator every night before we lie down to ſleep, not knowing but they may be ſeperated before the Morning.

Atha. Death is alſo called a Change, Job xiv. 14. *All the days of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come.* And 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. *Behold I ſhew you a myſtery; we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the laſt trump (for the trumpet ſhall ſound,) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and*

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we ſhall be changed. The Soul muſt alſo undergo a great Change, and that not only in the hour of Death, but during our Life, as the Apoſtle ſays, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory, even as by the ſpirit of the Lord.* And as our Bodies do daily from our Birth grow gradually nearer and nearer to our great Change *Moriendo Morimur*: So our Souls by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt are from the Day of our New Birth *renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. Till at length we wholly put off the Old Man, and *put on the new man which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, Eph. iv. 24. And therefore our Saviour ſaid, *he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me ſhall never die*, John xi. 25, 26.

Bio,

Bio. Death is no Annihilation of either the Soul or Body; it's only a ſeperation for a time, a tranſmutation from earthly to heavenly Beings, and the Gate or Entrance into Eternal Life to all true Believers, who as our Saviour ſays, ſhall never die. Let us therefore make ſure of an Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt who is *the life and light of men*, John i. 4. Let us believe in him, and go unto him that we may have Life, and pray unto him for his quickening Spirit. Let us *awake from ſleep and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give us light*, Eph. v. 14.

Atha. Let us mind the Buſineſs for which we came into this World for, whilſt we have the Day of Life, for the Night cometh wherein none can work, now is our day of Tryal, and of Grace: God grant that we may ſo improve it, as to be ready when our Maſter calls, that we may Enter into his Joy.

Bio.

Bio. And now is the beſt time for us to prepare for Death whilſt (bleſſed be God) we are in Health, for we know not how ſoon we may be taken off in a Moment, by a ſudden Death, without any previous Sickneſs: But if it ſhould ſo pleaſe God to give us warning of our Diſſolution by a foregoing Sickneſs; yet we ſhould find it a very bad time to begin a ſerious Preparation for Eternity, if our Minds have not been uſed thereto before, in time of Health; for a Fevour may take away our Reaſon, or the languiſhment of the Body, and waſte of Spirits may unfit us for Prayer, or any other Duty; beſides ſomething or other of the World (if it be never ſo well ſettled before) will then be crowding in upon us: And Satan will be buſie (unleſs God reſtrain him) to tempt us to Deſpair.

Atha. Therefore, now we will ſet in order our worldly Affairs, now make our Peace with God thro' our Mediator

Mediator Jeſus Chriſt, that in the Hour of Death we may have nothing to do, but with Comfort, and Joy, reſign up our Souls into the Hands of our Redeemer with full expectation of a joyful Reſurrection of our Bodies, and reunion in everlaſting Happineſs; and as it is certain that as the Righteous ſhall go into Life Eternal, ſo the Wicked muſt go into Everlaſting Puniſhment, we can never be too ſtrict in examining our ſelves which way we are walking in, the way of Life, or Death: And if after moſt diligent, and ſtrict impartial Examination, and fervent Prayer, we find in our ſelves good Hope thro' Grace, that we are true Believers, unfeigned Penitents, devoted to the Glory, and reſigned to the Will of God, Lovers of God and all that bear his Image, Humble, Meek, Modeſt, Charitable, Beneficent to all Men: Yet after all, we muſt continually keep a ſtrict Watch over our ſelves that

we

we do not go out of the way again, nor faint, loyter, nor fall asleep in the way; but to be sure to be found watching ready to go when our Lord calls for us, of which he has given us many Warnings, as *Math.* xxv. from 1. to 13. Verse. And xxiv. 42. *Mark* xiii. 33. *Luke* xxi. 36. *Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching*, Luke xii. 37.

Bio. What a miserable Slaughter has Death made, since it entered into the World, I believe if all the dead Bodies from the beginning of the World down to this Day were now lying uncorrupted, side by side of each other, they would cover the Face of the whole habitable Earth.

Atha. Not unlikely, If you add to them the Bodies of all other Animals and Insects, and upon them the Bodies of all dead Vegetables; then you may think this globe of the Earth would be considerably enlarged beyond what it was at first created.

Bio.

Bio. So it would indeed be, if all theſe Bodies ſhould lie upon it uncorrupted; but they all at Death return to the Earth from whence they came, and ſo riſe up again in New Bodies, the Corruption of one being the Generation of another, and thus continues a perpetual Circulation without any addition of Matter to the end of the World. And ſo God brings Life out of Death continually before our Eyes every day, and notwithſtanding all the Changes and Tranſmutations of Bodies that can be thought of, ſuch as of Fiſhes devouring the Bodies of drowned Men, and Men again living upon thoſe Fiſhes, of Cannibals eating one another, *&c.* Yet we ſhall all riſe again in the ſame Bodies, tho' grately changed, as we may read in the fifteenth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians.*

Atha. Almighty is the Power, infinite is the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God: unſearchable are his Judg-

ments, and his Ways paſt finding out; of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be Glory for ever, *Amen.* I believe I ſhall riſe again in this very Body, and as *Job* ſays, xix. 26, 27. ſo ſay I, *Though worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold and not another.* My Body may in ſome ſenſe then be ſaid to be immortal, ſince it ſhall never be annihilated, only changed. But does not the Word of God, (in *Geneſis* ii. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die,*) ſignifie no more, but the ſeparation of the Soul and Body for a time? or the Deſtruction of the Form of the Body only?

Bio. Yes ſurely, Thereby is meant the death of the Soul alſo, not of its annihilation or ceaſing to think; but a loſs of its Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and likeneſs to God in which it was at firſt made, who by believing

ving the Words of Satan more than the Words of God, loſeth its Faith in, and dependance upon God, and thereby becomes ſpiritually dead to all that is Good, having the Image of God wholly defaced in it by its Diſobedience, and the Image of Satan drawn upon it. And as the Body in dying dies, that is to ſay, by Infirmities, Cares, Vexations, Labours, Diſeaſes, and other Forerunners of Death, is by Degrees worn out, till at length it can contain the Soul no longer, but gives up the Ghoſt; ſo the Soul by departing farther and farther from God the only Good, grows deeper and deeper plunged into all Evil by continued Habits of Diſobedience, Infidelity and all other Sins, till at length it comes to be paſt Life, Senſe or Motion towards God or Happineſs, and may be truly ſaid to be dead.

Atha. Oh Dreadful! The Lord in Mercy deliver us from this Death of Sin, and give us to believe in Jeſus

Chriſt, that we may receive his quickning Spirit, and live for ever. Let us hear what our Saviour who is the Reſurrection and the Life, ſays of himſelf in the fifth of *John*, *As the father raiſeth up the dead, and quickneth them; even ſo the ſon quickneth whom he will. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but is paſſed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the ſon of God, and they that hear ſhall live. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth, they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation.*

Bio. Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt. Bleſſed be the Lamb of God that

that taketh away the Sins of the World, for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood. Bleſſed be thy holy Spirit who Quickens, Renews and Sanctifies us, Strengthens, Comforts us, and Guides us into all Truth. *The body is dead becauſe of ſin; but the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſs; but if the ſpirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead dwell in us; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead ſhall alſo quicken our mortal bodies by his ſpirit that dwelleth in us*, Rom. viii. 10, 11. The Apoſtle St. *Paul*, in 1 *Theſ.* iv. having been diſcourſing of the ſecond coming of our Lord, of raiſing the dead, and meeting the Lord in the Air, &c. concludes with, wherefore comfort one another with theſe Words, and in 2 *Cor.* v. 8. *We are confident*, (he ſays) *and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be preſent with the Lord.* And in *Phil.* i. 23. he ſays he has *a deſire to depart and*

to be with Christ. And so it was with the primitive Christians; they were so far from fearing Death, that they were impatient till it came, till their Race was run, their Warfare accomplished, their Temptations and Tryals at an end, and they landed safe in the heavenly *Canaan*; and so it would be with us, if we had the like degree of Faith. *Ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the Promise,* Heb. x. 36. and what is this Promise but Eternal Life, under which Word is comprehended all manner of Happiness; as the Apostle says, 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Atha. The Lord make us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

Bio. And deliver us from the Power of Darkneſs, and tranſlate us into the Kingdom of his Dear Son.

Atha. Amen.

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